

# NEWS RELEASE

## DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

### Commissioner Claire DeMatteis

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**Presented by Jason P. Miller, Chief of Communications and Community Relations**

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## DOC reports additional positive COVID-19 test result

**Dover, DE --** The Delaware Department of Correction (DOC) today announced that one additional Correctional Officer tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the total number to 12 Correctional Officers to test positive for the virus.

**- A Correctional Officer, who is assigned to James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (JTVCC) in Smyrna.** The Correctional Officer was last on duty on 7 days ago - on April 6, when the Officer was assigned to supervise an inmate at an area hospital. After beginning to experience flu-like symptoms, the Officer began to self-isolate at home, and as symptoms developed the Officer sought medical attention, at which time a COVID-19 test was administered. The positive COVID-19 test result was received by the Officer on April 10. The Officer has continued to self-isolate and recover at home.

No additional information will be provided about the identity of the Correctional Officer for privacy protection.

"DOC Officers are actively supporting and following our aggressive screening and monitoring policies to help guard against the risk of transmission of COVID-19," **Commissioner Claire DeMatteis said.** "Individually as corrections professionals, and together as a Department, the DOC continues to take necessary steps every day to protect the health and safety of our Officers, healthcare workers, other employees and inmates."

The DOC is employing a variety of prevention, screening, cleaning and containment measures to guard against the spread of the novel coronavirus, including:

- All persons, including Officers, administrative staff and Probationer, who enter any Probation and Parole Office and any person entering any Level IV violation of probation and work release and Level V prison facility are screened for COVID-19, including a series of questions and a forehead temperature check with a digital thermometer
- Staff who present with symptoms are sent home to self-quarantine and directed to contact their health care provider.
- Newly arriving inmates are held in isolation for the first 14 days, during which they are carefully monitored, including daily temperature checks with a thermometer.

- DOC has implemented extra daily cleaning of DOC facilities and is using specialized fogging machines to disinfect entire rooms of common areas, housing units and workspaces.
- Face masks are being worn by Correctional Officers and contract healthcare workers as a protection for inmates, Officers and other employees. Face masks are also being provided to inmates who are in infirmaries, those with compromised immune systems, and certain inmates with institutional jobs.
- Most Probationer visits with Probation Officers were transitioned to phone check-ins beginning in March to support social distancing measures.

In addition, the DOC has temporarily suspended in-person prison programming to reduce the movement of people into facilities and movement of groups of people within facilities. Certain programs, including treatment and education programs and religious programming, are being transitioned to a virtual video format. Inmates continue to have outside recreation opportunities within their confined areas and continue to have access to phones to stay in regular contact with their loved ones. DOC is also expanding the use of electronic tablets among the inmate population, where available.

Get updated information about the DOC's response to COVID-19, read previous announcements of positive COVID-19 cases and review an informational chart of positive COVID-19 cases by DOC facility by **clicking HERE** and visiting <https://doc.delaware.gov>, and follow *decorrection* on Facebook and Twitter.

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